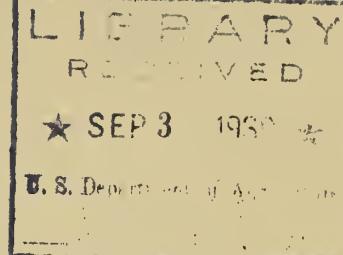


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H155R



HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmitt Carpenter, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered on Thursday, August 14, through 38 associated stations of the National Broadcasting Company in the National Farm and Home Hour.

How do you do, Homemakers:

Laundering problems are solved so many different ways these days that probably no two of us handle our laundry just alike. Some of us like to have it done at home; some of us have a washing machine; some of us send most things out to be washed, and do the rest by hand. In any case, somehow or other we must give attention to the family wash. And most of us have a number of things we launder ourselves unless they can be done under our close supervision. I am thinking now particularly of silk undergarments, was silk dresses, rayon garments, and delicately colored linen and cotton things. Besides there are always fine household linens, lace curtains, woolens, and articles belonging to the baby that have to be handled separately.

Careful attention in the laundering of silks and other delicate things pays not only in the way they look but in the way they wear. Silks should be washed with very mild soap, in lukewarm water, and have the least possible rubbing, because silk fibers are delicate. Gentle squeezing and working up and down in the suds is even better than gentle rubbing. It is best to squeeze out the suds without twisting or wringing the garment. Thorough rinsing in water of the same low temperature is important too. Squeeze out the rinse water gently or roll the silk garment in large absorbent cloths or bath towels to take up surplus water, and iron while damp. Silk scorches easily, and white silk yellows when pressed with a hot iron, especially if the soap has not been entirely removed in the rinsing. When evenly dampened, and ironed on the wrong side with a warm iron, silks come out best.

Some silks are easily watermarked and show darker spots if very wet places are ironed dry. Pongee is a notable example of this. It is better to iron pongee entirely dry to avoid spots and to prevent a stiff, slick appearance, though if evenly dampened and quickly ironed the result may be as good.

I never see a pongee garment without recalling a very spotted pongee shirt I saw a man wearing several years ago. The entire back and part of one sleeve of this otherwise very good looking shirt was decorated with large irregularly shaped spots that looked like grease. The wearer had taken off his coat as the summer day grew hotter, and had no idea I am sure how his shirt looked. Of course the spots were not grease but water spots from uneven dampening when ironed. The funniest part of the story is that this man was the buyer and head salesman for the silk section of a department store, and was constantly giving advice to customers on the selection and care of silks.

Silk hose last so much longer if they are carefully washed after each wearing. I have known college girls away from home who made the mistake of laying party hose aside unlaundered between wearings, feeling that because they were worn such a short time they need not be washed. An even worse habit is stuffing hose inside of shoes overnight or between wearings. The acid and salts of perspiration are very hard on silk fibers, and should be at least rinsed out with clear water as soon as possible after the hose are taken off. One friend of mine makes it an unbreakable rule to rinse out the feet of her hose each night, whether she gives the hose a thorough washing or not. This takes only a minute but it removes the perspiration and prevents rotting, so that she can safely accumulate hose for several days until she has time to give them careful attention. She is doubtless right in believing that her hosiery bill is greatly reduced by this habit.

Some types of rayon are weaker when wet than pure silk, and so must be laundered with particular care. Lukewarm water, pure mild soap, no rubbing, thorough rinsing, hanging up carefully without clothespins, and ironing with a medium hot iron are the essential precautions. Manufacturere usually warn customers too about rough finger nails and rings that may catch the fabric and tear it, or start a run.

In general, cottons are considered less delicate and easier to launder than silks. Cottons do offer their own problems, however, especially if they are colored. The celicately colored cotton fabrics in vogue just now probably need almost as careful handling as silk if they are to wear well and hold their color. Though it is not stylish to be crisp, cotton dresses iron better and stay fresh longer, if they are dipped in a very dilute starch water. Very thin starch serves to replace the original finish, and does not give a stiff starched appearance. Ironing cotton prints on the wrong side first and then smoothing a bit on the right side also helps in reproducing a finish much like that of new goods.

These and many other home laundering suggestions are found in F.B. 1497, "Methods and Equipment for Home Laundering". Whether the bulk of your laundry work is done in or out of your home, I am sure you will find helpful ideas in this bulletin.
